

BBC
NEWS

Election
2005





Foreword

The 2005 General Election will mark fifty-five years of BBC Television News election coverage, and the guiding principles in 1950 of accuracy, fairness and impartiality will continue to be the cornerstone of the BBC's reporting more than half a century on.

The political map, following devolution, has changed dramatically since 1950, but the BBC's aim of supporting civic life and national debate, and providing trusted news and information to help its audiences make sense of the world, remains today.

Summary

The BBC will aim to deliver the most comprehensive coverage of the General Election. Its extensive resources and multi-media platforms spanning television, radio and online will ensure that the key issues, comments, candidates and results are brought to audiences across the UK.

In addition to TV and radio coverage, the BBC's position at the forefront of broadcasting technology will make 2005 the first broadband election, affording viewers broadcast quality video footage via their computers. Furthermore, an expanded and exciting internet programme on the BBC's award winning website will give people of all ages even more information and features, including blogs from BBC correspondents, chat room sites and voter views via their mobile phones.



"Our programmes and services will give everyone a chance to get the latest news from the campaign as well as accurate, in-depth information about the issues that really matter to them. Broadband opens up a wealth of creative opportunities and we'll be using the internet and interactivity to give voters new ways to exchange views and get their opinions heard".

Helen Boaden

Helen Boaden
Director of BBC News





The Coverage

The BBC will endeavour to build on its viewing success during the 2001 General Election when it attracted an audience of 18.4 million viewers for its Election Night coverage.

The BBC's key strengths of in-depth coverage, specialist reporters and a range of platforms for audience opinions will all make for accessible, informative and authoritative coverage.



The BBC will go "on the road" to air the key issues, hear the voters' views and party promises.

BBC programmes will visit towns and cities across the UK, via the BBC's official election bus, allowing people to voice their opinions and take part in the leading debates.



BBC News 24 and **BBC Parliament** will provide a rolling service of live and recorded news conferences, rallies and events during the campaign.

On radio, there will be coverage across all networks, including election first-timers, **1Xtra** and **Asian Network**, with the latter offering the UK's ethnic audiences a wider platform for airing their opinions. Comprehensive reporting of all the latest developments will also be found on **Radio Five Live**, and **Radio 4**.

The BBC's flagship TV and radio programmes, including **Panorama**, **Today**, **Newsnight**, **The World at One** and **Question Time** will all provide special election coverage. Programmes will feature interviews with the leading political players, with presenters including David Dimbleby, Jeremy Paxman, and John Humphrys, asking the questions which the electorate wants answered.

Specialists

Across news bulletins on radio and TV, the BBC's stable of specialist correspondents, including Andrew Marr, Jeff Randall, Evan Davis and Mark Easton will provide comment and expert analysis, helping audiences form their own opinions as the campaign develops. They will cut through the rhetoric, clarifying party pledges and the party numbers.





The Campaign Coverage

Across the UK



The BBC will be touring the country and hearing from constituents across the nation. Serving outlets across **BBC News 24**, the **Six O'Clock News**, **Radio Four** and **BBC Five Live**, the BBC's official election bus will be a focal point for public debate, participation and information. The BBC will also listen to constituents' views on BBC TWO's **The Election Roadshow**. Presented by Sally Magnusson, the programme will question the political decision makers and then ask viewers for their feedback.

In Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, the BBC will be complementing network coverage of the General Election in their nations on TV, radio and online. Programmes including BBC Wales' **Dragon's Eye** and **Wales Today**, **Newsnight Scotland** and BBC ONE Northern Ireland's **Let's Talk** will reflect national issues, while also focusing on what matters to voters on a local level. Through new initiatives such as "Groundswell" – live broadcasts of public meetings – and local "Question Time" style sessions in local radio stations, the BBC will bring local constituents face to face with their candidates – asking the questions they want answered, on issues like school closures, hospital beds and asylum seekers. Election features include BBC Southern Counties Radio following the opinions of a panel of floating voters and an election soap opera at BBC Radio Leicester. For Welsh speakers, **S4C** and **BBC Radio Cymru** will provide full coverage, together with on-line services in both languages on **BBC Wales Online** and **BBC Cymru'r Byd**.

Continuous and Live Programming

BBC News 24 will be *the* election channel providing the fullest coverage throughout the campaign. The rolling news channel will provide: a nightly slot with Political Editor, Andrew Marr, analysing the day's events, a weekly outside broadcast from different cities, as well as roadshow reports across the country. There are also Westminster reports fronted by News 24 Chief Political Correspondent James Landale and his team, and a new insight series by the 13 Political Editors in the BBC Nations and Regions. **Campaign Talk** will replace **Straight Talk** during the election.



BBC Radio Five Live



Making the most of its live facility, **Five Live** will invite audiences to take part in many of its election features: Jon Pienaar will accompany eighteen year old, first-time voters to party press conferences to gauge their response to party policies. Five Live ballot boxes will give listeners a vote on issues they want discussed, and two young people will have the chance to report on the campaigns. There will be regular reports from a house in a marginal seat and a “Rant Line” to register comment and concern. The network will also team up with the **Asian Network** and **1Xtra** for a series of major debates on location.

Daily TV Bulletins



Breakfast News and the **Six O’Clock News** will report from across the country taking the regional temperature on key issues. The **One O’Clock News** will use the latest in big screen technology to build an easy-to-see composite of the issues discussed, and the **Ten O’Clock News** will have extended bulletins each night, coming live from Westminster at key moments in the campaign.

Newsnight’s Jeremy Paxman will question the three main party leaders in a series of special interviews for BBC ONE on primetime. The programme will also be extended throughout the campaign, to include a special evening Saturday edition, featuring guest correspondents and outside broadcasts from around the country. Political correspondent, David Grossman will assess the campaigns, Political Editor, Martha Kearney will report from Westminster and Michael Crick, complete with helicopter, will file his distinctive rapid reaction pieces and constituency profiles. In addition, the award-winning Baghdad Blogger Salam Pax, who memorably covered the Iraqi elections for Newsnight, will make a film of his impressions of the UK general election. While culture correspondent Stephen Smith will spend the campaign in a student house in Nottingham to track the apathy vote.





Panorama, the current affairs flagship will include reports on a number of election manifesto issues, including law and order.



There will be more of both BBC ONE's **This Week** and BBC TWO's **The Daily Politics**. Fronted by Andrew Neill and Daisy Sampson, The Daily Politics will broadcast live five days a week. The programme will feature a number of location reports, including visits to a prison and a travellers' camp. While cartoons from the award-winning Aardman Animations (Creature Comforts) will give a fresh, amusing look to voters' views on **This Week**. Doing something different, BBC ONE's **The Politics Show** will use a narrow boat to navigate the canals to report from across the country.



Newsround will cover the key issues affecting children, engaging them in politics and giving them a platform for their views. This will include a chance to vote in the Big Ballot Box; reports on the Y-Vote the Hansard mock election for schoolchildren; as well as explaining how elections work, who the main parties are and what the results mean.



Radio Coverage

Radio 4 and **Radio Five Live** will lead the BBC's radio election coverage. Flagship news programmes will assess election tactics, performances and manifestos. Giving listeners even more choice, there will also be extended coverage on **Radio 1** and **2**, local and digital stations.

Radio 4



John Humphrys will present **Today** five days a week throughout the campaign, and there will be Saturday programmes in front of invited audiences. For the duration of the election, **Today** will test the promises and debate the big questions. The programme's listeners will for the first time get the chance to set the campaign agenda. They will tell the programme which issues matter most to them, and the programme will take their questions to the politicians. If they are not satisfied with the answer, **Today** will ask again... and again.

There will be a specially extended **The World at One** with listeners having the opportunity to question senior politicians in a daily phone-in.

PM will have regular presenter Eddie Mair in the studio, while Carolyn Quinn co-presents from across the country.

Special programming will be part of **The World Tonight**, **Talking Politics** and **The World This Weekend**. For the latter, James Cox will present from the campaign trail.

Radio 1



Newsbeat will be out and about talking to young, first time-voters. "Minute manifestos" will give politicians 60 seconds to present their position on given issues and the three main parties will also answer to a panel of first-time voters. Sister network, **1Xtra** will feature three big election debates from different locations nationwide.





BBCi

BBC Online

For the first broadband election, BBC Online is offering exciting new features for its visitors, including an election bible answering all questions from how to vote, to why ballots are secret, and:

- **The “Issues grid”** – an interactive site comparing parties on different issues.
- **Where I Live** – the definitive candidate database, accessed by postcode, or via the BBC *flashmap*.
- **Desktop Peter Snow** – a virtual pop-up on your screen, bringing breaking news, flagging features and relaying your chosen constituency results as they happen.
- **Voters’ video views** – from a selected group of viewers, sent in via their 3G mobile phones.
- **Journo Blogs** – posted by BBC correspondents around the UK throughout the campaign.
- **Results database** – this will be one of the fastest results services around. Using the latest technology, users can watch the UK’s map literally changing colour as the results build through the night.

BBC Interactive

The red button will bring extra options for digital viewers; offering four more screens, increased viewing choices on election night and a wealth of additional information.

Ten O’Clock News Extra, the late evening bulletin’s interactive service will continue to provide viewers with options for extra coverage of all stories.

Election coverage can be found at:

www.bbc.co.uk/election2005



The Results



Election Day sees the culmination of the BBC's coverage with a multi-media live results service on **BBC ONE**, **Radio Four** and **Five Live**, plus **BBC Scotland**, **BBC Wales**, **BBC Northern Ireland** and all BBC local radio stations. **BBC Online** will also offer a comprehensive results service, as will **Ceefax** and **Digital Text** – via mobile phones. News outlets will make use of a special exit poll from NOP/MORI, jointly commissioned by the BBC and ITN.

BBC TV will be on air all night as the results start coming in until the following morning. BBC ONE's **Election Night Special** will run from throughout the evening, until 6am the next day.

Top presenters, David Dimbleby, Jeremy Paxman, Peter Snow, and Fiona Bruce will follow developments as results come in, while Political Editor Andrew Marr and Professor Anthony King will offer expert analysis from the studio. New graphics on screen will reveal region by region results and the red button option for interactive users will give even greater detail.

Some 55 outside broadcast units will provide links to a record number of live locations. All 646 contested seats will be covered by the BBC, and a team of over 100 journalists and production staff will be fact-checking and providing analysis throughout the night from BBC Television Centre in London.





As the results continue to come in, **Breakfast News** takes over from BBC ONE from 6 - 9am and there's a regional opt-out from 9 - 9.30am. Special election programming continues from 9am until the **One O'Clock News**. Extended coverage will also be available on **BBC TWO**, **BBC News 24** and **BBC Parliament**.

BBC Scotland, **BBC Wales** and **BBC Northern Ireland** will complement network coverage with results programmes on TV, radio and online, focusing on their national results as well as the wider picture across the UK.



BBC Radio 4, will be on air through the night with coverage presented by James Naughtie and Carolyn Quinn. Jeremy Vine will be presenting an Election Day special on **Radio 2** from 10.30pm-2.30am.

BBC Five Live will have Nicky Campbell, Shelagh Fogarty and Peter Allen in the studio, while Sonia Deol and Adil Ray will be fronting the **Asian Network** coverage and Tricia Liverpool takes the reins at **1Xtra**.



For listeners wanting more in-depth local coverage, BBC's local radio stations will have reporters out in force, reporting from every count across England to bring live coverage of the events as they unfold to local listeners. They will also be on air overnight and into the following day.

As the political dust settles, BBC multi-media coverage will continue, bringing analysis to audiences about what the consequences and impact of the result means for them and for the country.
